

Thanks

The Information Technology Department extends a special thanks to our volunteers, Paul Yannoni and Robert Mong for their enormous contributions. With their ongoing efforts in helping to maintain our infrastructure, they have helped in keeping the IT repair and service costs at a minimum.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Tobey, Information Technology Director

LAKE BOON COMMISSION

The Lake Boon Commission (LBC) is made up of three people appointed by the Selectmen of Hudson and Stow. There are two members from Stow and one from Hudson, reflecting the area of the lake in each town. Current serving members are Lee Heron from Stow, Cindy Curley from Stow and Conray Wharff from Hudson (Chair). The LBC holds meetings at the Stow Town Building about once a month. The meetings are public; everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Meeting notices are posted at both Town Halls at least 48 hours before the meetings.

Lake Boon is such a wonderful secret that we all share; how often do friends come over and remark that they never knew there was such a nice lake so close to home and work. I feel we are all very fortunate to live here as one community. You do not have to live on the lake to get on the lake. Beach passes are available at the Stow town building for the Stow beach and there is a public boat ramp on Sudbury Road.

Our single community has many interests and views about how to enjoy our lake. Some like to sail, swim, fish or boat, others are happy just being by the water. All these interests share a love of the lake but not always a love of the other person's point of view. One of the biggest challenges we face is how the best manage our lake for everyone's enjoyment.

This is where we need your help; everyone needs to understand that we all share the lake and needs to be tolerant of the other guy. Everyone needs to know and follow the rules of the lake. Motorboats have to watch their wakes and be aware of swimmers; swimmers need to understand that they are hard to see from boats when they are in the middle of the lake under a glaring sun.

Jet skiers have a particularly difficult problem; the lake is so small that is very difficult to always be 150 feet from shore or another boat. Many lakes have banned jet skis just because they do not honor the rules. Motorboats have to be aware of their wakes and stay at least 75 feet from shore and other boats.

We need to do not just what the rules require, we need to use our common sense to do "the right thing".

Not everyone will do that so we will enforce the rules. We have patrol officers who will be out at random times to enforce our rules. Tickets are \$50 each for each violation; we can easily write more than one ticket when we stop a person.

There are several rules that I would like to point out, as these are the ones people most often violate.

Headway speed only and lights on after dark for all boats, whether driven by motor or human power. Yes, all boats should have lights on after sunset, not just, motor boats. From ½ hour before sunset to ½ hour after sunrise the lake speed limit is headway speed only. Lights are required from sunset to sunrise. Headway speed is boat in gear with no extra throttle.

Jet Skis are required by state law to be 150 feet away from everything at any speed other than idle. This is very difficult on Lake Boon. It means that you have to idle out 150 feet from shore before applying power; it means that you must stay at least 150 feet from shore, other boats and swimmers, at any speed other than headway only.

Drinking of alcoholic beverages and throwing trash into the lake are prohibited. Many a morning the lake has aluminum fish floating on its waters. Throwing anything into the lake is against the law. That includes leaves and grass as well as more obvious trash. You can get a ticket just for having alcoholic beverages in your boat or throwing anything overboard.

Any towing activity requires three people, one to be towed, one to drive and one to observe. Pulling a person without an observer is a major safety issue. Observers must be over 12 years of age. We have zero tolerance policy for safety violations.

Lake Boon is under attack from non-native invasive weeds and increased nutrient loading. The primary way to combat these attacks is a comprehensive lake management program that includes nutrient management and aquatic vegetation management. Aquatic vegetation management is done with state-approved herbicides applied under state permits and Orders of Conditions from the Conservation Commissions of Stow and Hudson. Nutrient management is accomplished by intercepting nutrients before they get to the lake in catch basins and Lake Drawdown, which removes the nutrients.

Lake Boon is under a total lake management program designed to improve water quality and manage invasive weeds in the lake. The Conservation Commissions of both Stow and Hudson and the Board of Health in Stow are working with the Lake Boon Commission to improve water quality and manage the weeds

Lake Drawdown is one of the tools we use in the total lake management program. Lake Drawdown is complicated but best thought of as emptying a bathtub. Drain some of the water away and the nutrients leave the lake. It is free but may affect shallow wells around the lake. The Lake Boon Commission, working with the Stow and Hudson boards, state DEP, and many interested parties, has permission to do Lake Drawdown in the fall of year 2011 under a public order of conditions.

Lee Heron is one of Lake Boon's patrol officers. As a member of the LBC he manages patrolling of Lake Boon for both the LBC patrol boat and the Stow Police patrol boat. The Stow Police boat is also manned by Stow police officers. The goal is to ensure safety and enforce regulations on the lake. All power boats are required to be registered; the state Environmental police and our patrol officers will enforce registration requirements.

Boat owners are responsible for their boats at all times, regardless of who is driving their boat. Every summer we stop many boats for minor violations resulting in tickets and fines. We have a zero tolerance policy for safety violations; if a boat is stopped for safety violations it will be ticketed.

The rules are posted at the launch site or available on line from the Stow town website. State rules are on line as well at Mass.gov. If you send Conray Wharff an e-mail at the address below, he will send you a copy of the rules.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with ongoing lake management projects. If you are interested, please contact us via your Town Offices or send e-mail to Conray Wharff at cwharff@comcast.net

Respectfully submitted,

Conray Wharff, Hudson, Chair
Cindy Curley, Stow

Lee Heron, Stow

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

In 2010, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environment offered communities with recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP) the opportunity to extend their plans two additional years. The Town of Stow applied for an extension of its 2008 plan and the extension was accepted. This will allow Stow to participate in Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services grants through September 2014.

Also in 2010, the Open Space Committee completed a review of property evaluation criteria. These criteria (outlined in the OSRP) include natural resources such as water, habitat, and soils, as well as cultural resources, such as scenic landscape, state heritage landscapes, and recreational trails. By comparing these resources with the existing land protection in Stow, the committee will be in a better position to make recommendations to the town when potential open space lands become available.

In 2010 Stow's Chapter 61 Quick Response Team began operating. This group, made up of representatives from seven town boards and committees, has developed a standard report to quickly orient town officials regarding properties which the town may exercise Right-of-First-Refusal on, as part of the Chapter 61 tax abatement program.